

Angleton Given CIA's Highest Award

Associated Press

James Jesus Angleton, once described as the mastermind of a massive illegal domestic spying operation by the Central Intelligence Agency, received the agency's highest award yesterday.

The Distinguished Intelligence Medal was presented to the ousted counterintelligence chief by Deputy Director Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters at a small, unannounced ceremony. Intelligence Director William E. Colby, who forced Angleton to retire at the end of last year, was out of town, addressing a meeting of news executives in New Orleans.

An agency spokesman confirmed that the award had been presented to Angleton and said it was "coincidence" that the ceremony had been scheduled for a day when Colby was out of town.

The citation presented to Angleton praised him "for long and distinguished service in counterintelligence. Angle-

ton's intelligence career spanned more than 30 years stretching back to World War II.

When Angleton and three of his top aides were forced by Colby to retire last December, their departure was widely linked to the publication by The New York Times of allegations that Angleton headed a spy operation against anti-war dissidents in the late 1960s.

Colby has since stated publicly that Angleton let in a policy dispute over detente with the Soviet Union and liaison with the Israeli intelligence service.

Although officially retired, Angleton has continued to work at agency headquarters

in Langley, Va., where a spokesman said he is serving as a consultant aiding in the transition to an anonymous successor as head of counterintelligence.